

Plurals of Nouns

Rules for Plurals of Nouns

Examples

1. Most nouns form their plural by adding <u>s</u> to the singular form.	door – doors boy – boys	table – tables desk – desks
2. Nouns ending in <u>s</u> , <u>ss</u> , <u>sh</u> , <u>ch</u> , <u>x</u> , or <u>z</u> form their plural by adding <u>es</u> .	dish – dishes watch – watches church – churches Jones – Joneses	box – boxes fizz – fizzes kiss – kisses atlas – atlases
3. a. Nouns ending in <u>y</u> preceded by a consonant are made plural by changing the <u>y</u> to <u>i</u> and adding <u>es</u> .	lady – ladies sky – skies baby – babies	try – tries family – families ally – allies
b. Nouns ending in <u>y</u> preceded by a vowel are made plural by adding <u>s</u> only.	boy – boys key – keys	play – plays
4. Many nouns ending in <u>f</u> or <u>fe</u> change the <u>f</u> to <u>v</u> and add <u>es</u> .	wife – wives thief – thieves leaf – leaves	life – lives shelf – shelves calf – calves
	Exceptions: belief – beliefs chef – chefs chief – chiefs handkerchiefs – handkerchiefs	cliff – cliffs roof – roofs
5. a. Nouns ending in <u>o</u> preceded by a vowel add <u>s</u> to the singular.	rodeo – rodeos shampoo – shampoos zoo – zoos	patio – patios audio– audios
b. Nouns ending in <u>o</u> preceded by a consonant usually add <u>es</u> to the singular.	tomato – tomatoes	hero – heroes echo – echoes
Exception: words of Spanish or Italian origin that end in o simply add an s.	Exceptions: banjo – banjos auto – autos	piano– pianos solo – solos
6. Some nouns form their plurals irregularly.	child – children goose – geese foot – feet woman – women	tooth – teeth man – men louse – lice mouse – mice

	ox – oxen
7. Some nouns have the same form in the singular and the plural.	<div> <div>sheep – sheep</div> <div>Swiss – Swiss</div> <div>Chinese – Chinese</div> <div>Japanese – Japanese</div> </div> <div> <div>fowl – fowl</div> <div>deer – deer</div> <div>fish – fish</div> </div>
8. Compound nouns usually are made plural by adding <u>s</u> to the important word.	<div> <div>son-in-law – sons-in-law</div> <div>passer-by – passers-by</div> <div>high school – high schools</div> <div>court martial – courts martial</div> </div> <p>Exceptions: When a compound word is written as one word, the plural <u>s</u> is added to the whole word.</p> <div> <div>cowboy – cowboys</div> <div>girlfriend – girlfriends</div> </div>
9. Some nouns ending in <u>s</u> are usually singular. They have no plural form.	<div> <div>mumps</div> <div>measles</div> <div>news</div> </div> <div> <div>economics</div> <div>politics</div> <div>mathematics</div> </div>
10. Some nouns ending in <u>s</u> are always plural. They have no singular form.	<div> <div>scissors</div> <div>clothes</div> <div>spectacles (eyeglasses)</div> </div> <div> <div>pliers</div> <div>trousers</div> <div>pants</div> </div>
11. Letters, numbers, and signs usually add <u>'s</u> to form the plural.	<div> <div>+ 's</div> <div>– 's</div> </div> <div> <div>His <u>1's</u> look like my <u>7's</u>.</div> <div>He minds his <u>p's</u> and <u>q's</u>.</div> <div>He never remembers to cross his <u>t's</u>.</div> </div>

Practice: Write the plurals of the following:

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|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. wish | _____ | 7. man | _____ |
| 2. monkey | _____ | 8. goose | _____ |
| 3. ferry | _____ | 9. lunch | _____ |
| 4. knife | _____ | 10. watch | _____ |
| 5. roof | _____ | 11. mass | _____ |
| 6. leaf | _____ | 12. deer | _____ |